



THE TADRA PROJECT

ORPHAN CHILDREN'S VILLAGES IN TIBET

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NEWSLETTER 2020





DEAR SPONSORS, GODPARENTS AND FRIENDS OF THE TADRA PROJECT,

Dear sponsors, godparents and friends of the Tadra project,
This year, our Annual Report 2020 comes to you in a shortened form. In so many respects, 2020 has been completely different from anything we might have imagined. On account of the Corona situation, this is the first time that there has been no opportunity to travel to the Children's Villages, with the result that our traditional travel reports are unfortunately missing from the Report this year.

In addition, a drastic event in our Children's Village in Dawu has turned our Tadra world there upside down: in September the local authorities ordered that our primary school (1st-6th grade) be closed and that all the children should move to the newly built state school in the nearby city of Dawu. This was an enormous shock for us all, despite the rumours and vague announcements that had come before! Many tears were shed by our children and the staff, while the local population expressed its support, gathering in large numbers in the Children's Village with loud protests.

But there was nothing to be done, and all the children were collected, even the youngest ones who will be obliged to attend a kind of pre-school on the same premises. Our staff and house-mothers were offered the possibility of moving to the new school with the children, while four house-mothers stayed in the Children's Village at their own request.

By dint of tough negotiations on the part of our two Village leaders Jampa and Kunga it was possible to ensure that all the children would be allowed to return to the Children's Village at weekends and during the holidays, so that they would not lose their home completely. This was very important to us, as they can continue to be looked after by our house-mothers and Village leaders. In addition, we received the promise of continued finance for the some 200 children and young people who have left the Village and are completing an apprenticeship or attending a secondary school or university. This includes all the Tadra children who are finishing 6th grade and would otherwise end up on the streets without a proper education.

We have officially protested through our Village leaders against the violation of the existing contracts. We were offered negotiations on site, but this is unfortunately not feasible for the moment on account of the pandemic. We have great hopes that we will be able to travel to Tibet in the first half of 2021 and reach a written agreement with the authorities.

Fortunately, activities in our Children's Village in Golok continue unchanged, but we are constantly being obliged to implement new regulations there.

The work for our children and young people in Tibet will change, but we are very confident that we can continue with it in a different form. We are most grateful for your continued support to make this possible.

A warm „Tashi Delek“ to you all,

Dr. Youlha Tawo

1. Vorsitzende des Vereins „Tadra-Projekt e.V.“

Dr. Klaus Vedder

2. Vorsitzende des Vereins „Tadra-Projekt e.V.“

Beat Renz

Präsident des Stiftungsrates der
Tadra-DEMIGH-Stiftung



Building a children's house in the traditional style

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF THE TADRA PROJECT

Today we look back over 25 years of the Tadra project - a quarter of a century in which with your support we have been able to make a decisive improvement in the circumstances of a large number of Tibetan orphans and half-orphans from the poorest nomadic areas of Eastern Tibet. Our two Children's Villages have provided them with a sheltered home, while our schools have given them the opportunity to study, graduating splendidly to gain further qualifications.

The idea of creating a Children's Village and a school for orphans had long been an idea of Lobsang Pal-den Tawo. Implementation of the project took on concrete form when our founding member Yeshe Gonpo Kharsar of Switzerland brought back reports from several trips to his home in Eastern Tibet about the misery and lack of prospects of many neglected children and those living on the streets. In 1995, Lobsang Palden founded the non-profit organisation Tadra-Projekt e.V. in Germany. The project name is composed of the first letters of his hometown Tawo (now usually spelt Dawu) and the nearby hometown of Yeshe Gonpo: Drango. In 1997, together with Rüdiger Zahnow of Germany, these pioneers chose a plot of land near the city of Dawu and negotiated contracts with the authorities to build a Children's Village and school there for Tibetan orphans.

In 1998, the first 30 children were selected and housed and taught there, at first provisionally. Construction of the first children's house (Patrick House) began. In the following years, six more children's houses followed, plus a youth house (with a girls' and a boys' wing), a primary school in 2000, a crafts school, an assembly hall with communal kitchen, a bathhouse and a sports field.

For a few years we also pursued plans to build a small hospital, but these had to be abandoned because permits could not be obtained.

Word of the success of the Children's Village in Dawu got around, so that in 2005 we were able to start building a second Children's Village in Golok/Amdo at the request of the local population and authorities.

From the very beginning we received wide support from Switzerland, for example from Tenzin Wangmo through her foundation, now called the Tadra DEMIGH Foundation, which exclusively supports the Tadra project. In 2008 we were joined by Beat Renz, who helped us to expand our efforts and fundraising in Switzerland and has been invaluable to us with his numerous trips to the Children's Villages.



Jampa, our Dawu Village leader, with one of his young charges



Dawu/Kham

The Children's Village at Dawu currently houses 170 children (either at the primary school or those of pre-school age). In all 218 children and adolescents live outside the Village and are in training or at higher schools and universities. Since its foundation, a total of 416 young people have completed their schooling and vocational training and are now working as teachers, doctors, civil servants, police officers, craftsmen or businessmen and women.

We currently still employ two Village leaders, four house-mothers and a gatekeeper.

Two brief histories

Dechen Paldron came to the Children's Village after she lost both parents at an early age. After graduating from school, she completed medical training and now works as a general practitioner in the city of Dawu..

Sonam Choedon, a nomad girl with no parents, came to the Children's Village at the age of about 7. She now works as a teacher, mainly of Tibetan, in a school in Dawu.



*Dechen Paldron (l.)
Sonam Choedon (r.)*



*Thupten Nyima,
Village leader in Golok*

Golok/Amdo

Our second in Golok was built on open land well away from the town, but with Golok's rapid growth, the Village is now literally surrounded by the outskirts of the town.

The Golok Children's Village comprises a primary and a secondary school, a crafts school, an art and music house, an assembly hall with communal kitchen, a library, a sports hall, ten children's houses, a youth centre (with girls' and boys' sections) and a bathhouse.

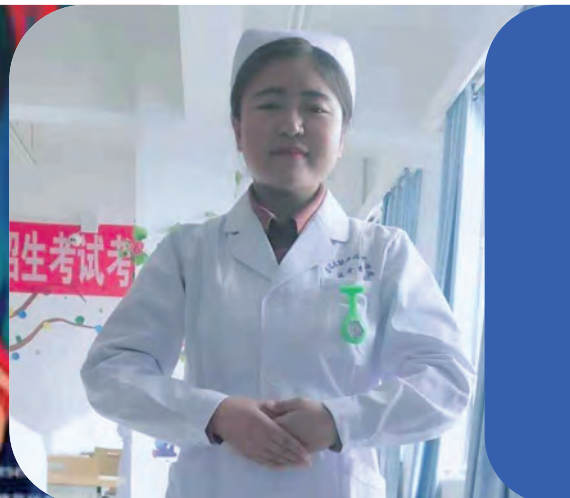
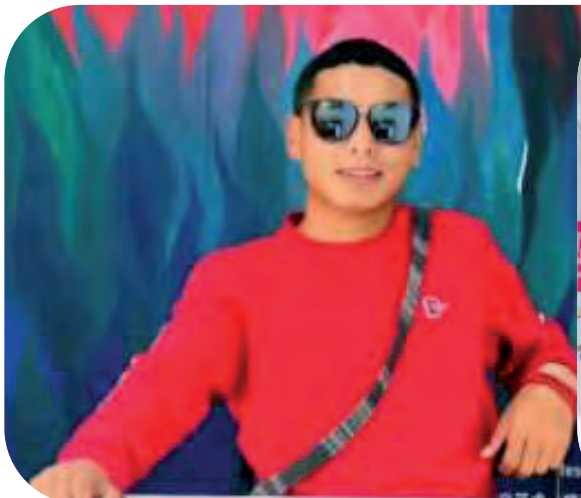
In Golok we employ a Village leader, eight house-mothers, seven teachers (the rest of the teachers are selected and financed by the authorities) and a gatekeeper/housekeeper.

At present, 316 children live in the Children's Village, 133 attend outside schools for further schooling or vocational training, and 50 young people are studying at university.

Two further histories

Tadrin is a nomad orphan who came to us at the age of 7. After his school education and vocational training in a technical field, he wanted to return to the Children's Village and is now head of the music and dance department in Golok.

Dölma Kyi came to the Children's Village when she was already 14. Both her parents had died. She was placed in the 4th grade, graduated and is currently training as a nurse in the city of Xining/Amdo.



*Tadrin L.
Dölma Kyi (r.)*

With the help of the housemothers, the day starts in style



The Tadra-Team

Our Tadra team still consists of a small circle of volunteers from Tibet, Germany and Switzerland. Most of them have been with us from the very beginning, and the project has become something of a life task for us. The far too early death of our project founder Lobsang Palden in 2019 was a huge loss for us and it still hurts today. He was a great inspiration for all of us, over and over again.

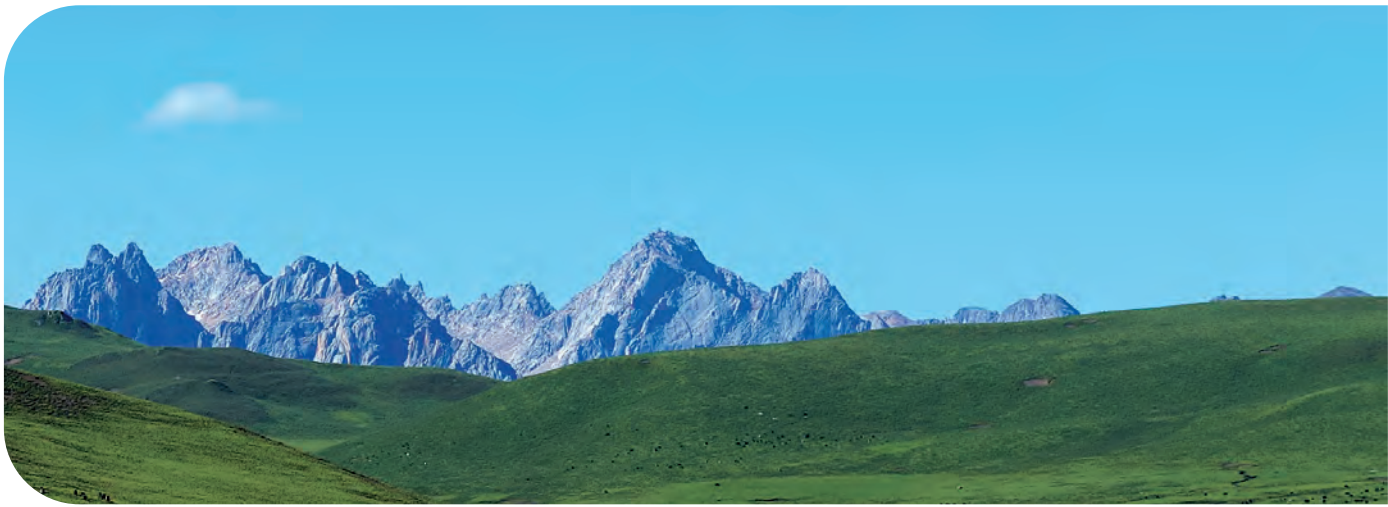
But without our numerous supporters, sponsors, godparents and donors from Switzerland, Germany and other countries, the creation of the Tadra project in Eastern Tibet would never have been possible. For this we convey our most heartfelt thanks to all of you! And we are very very well aware of how grateful the many children, adolescents, alumni and employees in Tibet feel towards you!

Outlook for the future

Like everything in life, the Tadra project has undergone constant change. Since our beginnings, Tibet has changed enormously in the wake of China's rapid development. Twenty-five years ago in the nomadic areas, one felt transported back to the Middle Ages. In the meantime, a number of efforts have been made to modernise the regions, either in terms of digitalisation or the enormous activity around road construction and airports. This has had a huge impact on traditional nomadic life and can also be seen in the area around our two Villages. For the many children in need in these regions, however, this does not initially mean an improvement in their living situation, so our project remains necessary for a good while yet.

In the coming years, we will continue to focus our planning on enabling all the children under our care to obtain a school-leaving or vocational qualification so that they can ultimately stand on their own two feet. To this end we continue to ask for the support and financial help of our sponsors and supporters. Please stay loyal to us!

Tashi Delek!



THE TADRA PROJECT IN FIGU

Our income from donations and sponsorships in Germany fortunately increased by some 50,000 euros in 2019. The expenses sheet shows that funds for the project from Germany were transferred only to Golok in 2019, where among other things, various renovations were needed. For Dawu it was only possible to transfer funds via the Swiss bank account of the Tadra DEMIGH Foundation, as a result of changes in the general conditions for foreign remittances to China.

In Switzerland, income was once again at a high level, above all because sponsors were found who were willing to support special construction and rehabilitation projects. On account of these measures in Golok and further project funding for Dawu, expenses of the Tadra DEMIGH Foundation were significantly higher than income this year. The difference was financed from the reserves for the individual projects.

2019 TADRA-PROJECT E.V. GERMANY

INCOME			EXPENSES		
Category	EURO	Percentage	Category	EURO	Percentage
Sponsorships	103,427.12	50.89	Homepage	362.52	0.29
Donations	99,813.66	49.11	Office supplies	427.43	0.35
Total	203,240.78	100.00 %	Bank charges	641.36	0.52
			Certification fees	140.00	0.11
			Postage	1,005.70	0.81
			Project financ, Golok	120,000.00	97.07
			Notary costs	405.84	0.33
			Other	28.22	0.02
			Telephone calls to Tibet	492.10	0.40
			Certificates	125.00	0.10
			Total	123,628.17	100.00 %
			Administration costs =		2.93 %

2019 TADRA-DEMIGH-STIFTUNG SWITZERLAND

EINNAHMEN			AUSGABEN		
Category	SFR	Percentage	Category	SFR	Percentage
Sponsorships	41,461.23	89.92	Bank charges	1,027.68	0.23
Donations	336,906.11	10.96	Revision, Breu Treuhand	969.30	0.21
Interest	93.82	0.02	Supervision fees, Stift	800.00	0.17
Total	378,461.16	100.00 %	Project financing, Dawu	221,501.58	48.23
			Project financing, Golok	235,000.00	51.16 %
			Total	459,298.56	100.00 %
			Administration costs =		0.6 %

by Chöni Tawo and Helga Fuhrmann

Studying in
Corona times



2020 NEWS - DAWU/KHAM

On 31 December 2019, the Chinese authorities first reported clustered cases of severe pneumonia in Wuhan to the WHO - the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. You have all followed its rapid spread in this globalised world. Thanks to the remoteness and rural structure of Tibet, our Children's Village in Dawu - and also the one in Golok - has fortunately been spared from infections and disease.

Those children who have no relatives spent the winter holidays (late December to February) in the Children's Village as usual, while the others stayed with family members. On account of the restrictions imposed during the pandemic, school work was only resumed in the month of March. The staff of the Children's Village first underwent professional hygiene training, with compulsory wearing of masks. Our village leaders told us with great enthusiasm how happy the children were that community life in the Children's Village and school lessons were now starting again.

No major building or renovation work was necessary in Dawu this year. This was convenient for us, as the changing requirements for foreign transfers to China meant that we have only been able to send a limited amount of money to Dawu from the Tadra DEMIGH Foundation bank account in Switzerland. For months now, we have been struggling to open a bank account in Dawu. We have submitted all the required documents and are now waiting for the final signature from the authorities. Once again we are experiencing that bureaucratic procedures in Tibet cannot be measured by our European standards.

In the summer there was another flood in the Children's Village. As our property is located close by to the river and is at risk, the children and staff were evacuated and had to sleep outside for a few days. Now the authorities have surveyed everything and announced that they will build a larger protective wall. This

Some of the students did particularly well at the end of the school year in 2020. We are especially happy for Pakyi Dölma, a girl of 21. Her good results in high school have qualified her to study medicine at the University of Xining.

Congratulations
to Pakyi Dölma





We have already reported on the dramatic events surrounding the transfer of our children to another school in Dawu in our welcome address above. The transfer to the new school has one positive aspect: board and lodging for preschoolers and primary school children will be free, so that we are relieved of these costs in addition to school fees for years 1 to 6. Our now empty primary school will be used in the future for Tibetan lessons at weekends and during the holidays, and possibly also for classes in traditional Tibetan music and dance.

In the meantime, we have received videos showing the children returning home to their Village in several buses at the beginning of the weekend. Their joy is written all over their faces. On the first weekend, former Village children came for the occasion and welcomed all the school children with gifts. The surprise and excitement were huge and in a very beautiful way illustrate the „Tadra spirit“ and the solidarity that continues among the „old boys and girls“.





2020 NEWS - GOLOK/AMDO

At our Children's Village in Golok, the Covid-19 pandemic also left its mark on the year coming to a close. Just as in Dawu, hygiene training and mandatory masking were prescribed for the resumption of school operations after the winter holidays. Again, fortunately, there were no infections or illnesses among our children and Village staff. The population was not allowed to travel beyond the provincial borders. In connection with the pandemic, the authorities ordered our Village in spring to buy and stockpile basic foodstuffs for a year.

In Golok, some renovation work became necessary this year. The huge temperature differences between the hot summers and very cold winters are taking their toll. For example, the roof of the primary school was leaking and moisture had penetrated the ceilings and walls. The entire roof had to be taken down and some walls renovated. The work is still going on, but should be completed before winter. The construction of a small separate toilet building should also be completed soon. Finally, according to an order from the authorities, the heating system for the entire Children's Village has to be renewed. The specifications and the estimated costs for this work are extraordinarily high. As we are not able to cover this work from our project funds, we firmly expect the authorities to take over the required costs in full. We have already submitted an application to this effect.



The reputation of our Children's Village in Golok and the school education there remains excellent. This is also reflected by the fact that our children get frequent visits from the local population as well as from officials from the region, who bring gifts and thus support our project. Handicraft and artisanal products produced in the Village or by former Tadra children can also be exhibited and sold all year round in a hall in the neighbouring town, with the proceeds being donated to the Children's Village. In this way, the first steps towards sustainability have been taken. We are happy to pursue this idea with the hope that, on the one hand, the rapidly rising costs in China will be partially absorbed, and on the other, that perhaps one day the Tadra Children's Villages in Tibet can continue to exist as independent units.

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„Made by Tadra“



887

ORPHANS AND

100 %

VOLUNTEER WORK

SPECIAL THANKS

TO MR. BRIAN LEVIN

SPECIAL THANKS TO
MR. BRIAN LEVIN, WHO
VOLUNTEERS EVERY YEAR TO DO
THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF
THE ANNUAL REPORT

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